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Dear Sir:

I am one who believes that the damage which "civilized" cultures have wrought upon the natural environment, indigenous cultures, and our own best and long-term interests largely as the result of cheap fossil energy use is of a far greater magnitude than most of us can imagine; we are rapidly moving deeper into a pervasive, persuasive and diabolical trap of our own making. Total world ecologic/economic collapse is a definite possibility in the not-too-distant future. Yes, I suppose you might say that events over the many years I've traveled and the many places I've worked as an engineer have made me a pessimist, but I became so through a realist's perspective.

It seems to me nonsensical to continue to adjudge lands from our warped and arrogant view as being either "ecologically significant" or otherwise. The history of how we have treated our lands and the measures that we have been taken to "conserve" them even as we continue to exploit them at some supposedly "sustainable" level shows clearly that we have always come up short in our judgments. The only true sustainability is that which evolved naturally over many millenia.

There is but a tiny fraction of land left which approximates its original condition, regardless of how we might classify it. I am of the radical opinion that whenever an opportunity to restore lands to natural management comes up, we must take full advantage of it. It is very late to be setting aside unbroken expanses of lands so as to let the natural healing process set in to any extent. My plea is to salvage as much of the Hanford Reservation -- "significant," disturbed or otherwise -- as is possible so as hopefully to set a precedent for future opportunities to do the same.

Best Regards,



Charles Thomas
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